(d) if so, the report/comments of the team; and

(e) the action taken on the report/comments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) to (e). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Rights of Animals

3536. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware about Universal declaration of Animal Rights made by International League for Animal Rights in 1978;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to adopt the same and make it a part of prevention of cruelties to Animals Act; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The fundamental duty of every citizen as enshrined in article 51A of Constitution is to show compassion to all living creatures and protect natural assets like forests, revive, lakes and wildlife etc. The Government have enacted the prevention of cruelty to animals Act, 1960 and established an Animal Welfare Board of India. Government are of the opinion that adoption of Universal declaration of Animal Rights by itself is no effective solution unless, those are fortified with public awareness. Concerted efforts are being made by the National Government, the State Government/ Union Territory Administration, to increase the awareness among public specially children on the importance of compassion, to animals. The Government will continue to do so every thing possible for promotion of animal welfare.

North-Eastern Department

3537. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have accorded approval for setting up of North-Eastern Department for the development of the North-Eastern region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this department has started functioning;

(d) whether the Union Government propose to set up such a Central Department for the development of backward and rural areas of the Uttar Pradesh as well;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) No, Sir. There is already a Division in the Ministry of Home Affairs dealing exclusively with the North-Eastern Region. The Prime Minister himself is taking keen interest in the developmental activities of the said Region. A cell for the North-East has been created in the Prime Minister's Office. This Cell would monitor and coordinate the implementation of various initiatives announced by the Prime Minister regarding the North-East.

(b) and (c). Question does not arise, in view of reply given at (a) above.

(d) to (f). Question does not arise, in view of reply given at (a) above.

Indo-Oman Fertilizer Joint Venture

3538. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Indo-Oman fertilizer joint venture has been finalised or is being finalised;

(b) the details of the joint venture including details of the parties involved; the type and the quantity of fertilizers and the price/cost involved;

(c) the major details of the terms of the agreement; and

(d) the time by which the joint venture agreement is expected to come into force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (d). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of India/Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO)/Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited (RCF) and the Government of Sultenate of Oman/Oman Oil Company on 30th July, 1994 to prepare a Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR) for setting up of 3500 tonnes per day ammonia and 4400 tonnes per day urea project in Oman. The DFR of the project has been completed. The DFR has estimated the project cost at US $ 1106 million including financing charges. The Joint Venture Agreement and other project agreements are at an advanced stage of finalisation.

Arms Dropping in Purulia

3539. DR. AMRIT LAL BHARTI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the CBI seized two more AK-56 rifles and a rocket launcher at Purulia, on November 13, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and